

A BOT FLY FROM THE WHITE-FOOTED MOUSE

BY CHARLES W. JOHNSON

Boston Society of Natural History

In July, 1930, Dr. Langdon Frothingham presented to the collection of the Boston Society of Natural History a bot fly—*Cuterebra (Bogeria) fontinella* Clark, obtained from a White-footed Mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis* Fischer). The following note was furnished by Dr. Frothingham: "The larva of the bot fly, which formed a large swelling on the thigh of the mouse, left its host August 26, 1929, was placed in a small jar of damp earth, and almost immediately buried itself in the earth. It was left in my closed summer cottage at Pocasset over the winter. The earth was dampened twice in the fall, September and October, and again in June and July. The fly emerged on July 15, 1930."

The fly is 15 mm. in length and represents the smallest of our species of *Cuterebra*. It agrees in every respect with *C. fontinella* Clark as defined by E. E. Austin,¹ but not with *Bogeria fontinella* Clark as described by Townsend.² The standing of *Bogeria* even as a subgenus is questionable. The chief character, "arista bare," used by Austin having proved to be erroneous, Townsend took up a second character, "antennal pit," used by Austin to separate *Bogeria* from *Rogenhoferia*. This character when confined to *Cuterebra* has evidently no generic value.

This is the first record to my knowledge of this bot fly having been actually obtained from the White-footed Mouse, although the larvæ of *Cuterebra* have been found in this Mouse at Sandwich, Mass., by Willard Reed; at Wareham, Mass., by Outram Bangs; and at Bedford, Mass.,

¹ Annals and magazine of Nat. History, ser. 6, vol. 15, 1895.

² Insector Inscitiæ Menstruus, vol. 5, p. 27, 1919.

by J. Miller. Riley and Howard³ record *Cuterebra* larvæ from a mouse—*Sitomys californicus* at West Creek, California. Larvæ of this genus have also been found in the Meadow Mouse at Provincetown, Mass. I remember that while living in Florida I obtained *Cuterebra* larvæ from the large wood rat.

The life history of the *Cuterebrinæ* is quite different from the other subcutaneous bots. The flies appear from May to July and deposit their eggs, the larvæ maturing quite rapidly, leaving their hosts in August and September, and passing the winter in the ground as pupæ.

The abundance of bots on the Barren-ground Caribou (*Rangifer caribou* Gmelin) in Labrador is well illustrated by a skin recently tanned for Mr. Francis Richardson. A piece 7 x 10 inches presented to the Museum shows over 200 perforations, the number in the entire skin far exceeding 1000. About one-third of these entirely perforated the skin, the others represented scars of older perforations that had healed. Judging from the antlers the caribou was probably about eight years old. The bot fly in all probability is *Oedemagena tarandi* Linn., although a similar species *O. terrænovæ* Knab, is found in Newfoundland infesting *Rangifer terrænovæ* Bangs.

³ Insect Life, vol. 6, p. 47, 1893.